

Remarks/Arguments:

This is a reply to the office action of December 29.

The claims have been amended to better distinguish the invention from the prior art.

Amended claim 1 now contains the feature that the plate can be installed on and removed from a respective cylinder. This feature is disclosed in the description at page 2, second paragraph. From the specification, it is clear that the plates with the valve arrangements are separate parts. The connecting rod recitation is supported at page 2, first paragraph. The limitation “in a single cycle” has been added to emphasize the specific functionality of the piston compressor of the present invention. Supporting disclosure is found in original claim 1, in the description on page 3, third paragraph and on page 7, third paragraph and in figure 2.

A clarifying amendment has been made to claim 2. As can be seen from figure 2 (as well as in figure 1) each of the plates is allocated to only one working chamber.

Regarding claim 1, we agree with the examiner that US 4,368,008 to Budzich does not teach that the cylinders are closed by plates with valve arrangements. A further difference is that Budzich discloses a compressor having a free piston, whereas the piston of the present application is mechanically driven.

In view of the several differences between the invention as defined in claim 1 and as disclosed in Budzich, we submit a skilled person would not have been led to the present invention the inventive solution by Budzich, particularly considering that the compressors are of substantially different types.

Even a combination of Budzich and the prior Collins publication (US 2,246,932) would not result to the inventive idea. As already mentioned Budzich refers to a compressor with a free piston. The piston is received in a compressor housing which is closed by plate-like covers with valve arrangements at both exterior sides (see e.g. Fig. 3). The valves in between are allocated to compressor housing parts which define the cylinders. Each of these housing parts is made of one piece and comprises at least a section in the form of a hollow cylinder and a perpendicular section.

Collins discloses a compressor in which the compression takes place alternately in the working chambers. The working chambers are closed by plates with valve arrangements. However, these plates are arranged at the outer sides of the compressor. Such a configuration of plates with valve arrangements is already shown in Budzich. So, even if he considered the teaching of Collins, a person skilled in the art would have had no motivation to change the construction of the compressor of Budzich.

We believe that the claims now presented are patentable over the prior art of record, and that this application is in proper form for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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